

PREFACE

TO

THE BATTLE OF THE FROGS AND MICE.

WHOEVER be the author of this little poem, it is replete with legitimate humour, and evinces no ordinary taste for parody. I cannot give a better sketch of its contents than in the words of Coleridge, whose analysis is as follows :

“A mouse, Psicharphax (Crumb-Filcher), exhausted with flying from a weasel, came to a pool to drink ; a wanton frog *Physignathus* (Puff-Cheeks), having apparently never seen such a wild-fowl before, enters into conversation with him, the result of which is that the mouse mounts upon frog’s back, and goes to sea. It should seem that frog meant to be honest, but a water-snake lifting up his head at no great distance, he is so frightened, that, forgetful of his poor landsman, down he dives to the bottom. Crumb-Filcher struggles, sputters, makes a speech denouncing his perfidious betrayer to the vengeance of every feeling mouse, and then sinks amongst the bulrushes. The deceased was son and heir of the king of the mice, (a weasel and a gin had bereaved him of two brothers,) and his father, by his influence, induces every mouse in the field to take arms and avenge him of the injurious frog. The frogs perceive the bustle ; and, arming themselves, are foolish enough to leave their more proper element, and meet their assailants on dry land. Meantime Jupiter

holds a council on the subject, but at the suggestion of Minerva—who, though extremely angry with the mice for nibbling one of her petticoats into rags, is still so incensed with the frogs for depriving her of sleep, that she will assist neither party—it is resolved that the gods shall be passive spectators of the contest. The battle begins: great prowess is displayed on either side; but at length the mice get the better, and the entire race of frogs is on the very point of extermination, when Jupiter interferes with lightning and thunder. The mice, however, pay no attention to these hints of the divine will, and are pursuing their advantage, when Jupiter, as a last resource, orders a detachment of crabs to make an *échelon* movement upon the victors. This manœuvre effectually checks the mice, who, some with their tails, and some with legs bitten off, retire to their holes, and leave the remnant of the frogs to croak dolefully over their defeat and loss.”

BATTLE OF THE FROGS AND MICE.

NAMES OF THE

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ EXPLAINED.

MICE.

PSICHARPHAX, *crumb-filcher*.
 TROXARTES, *bread-muncher*.
 LICHOMYLE, *lick-meal*.
 PTERNOTROCTAS, *chaw-bacon*.
 LICHOPINAX, *lick-dish*.
 EMEASICHYTROS, *pot-stalker*.
 LICHENOR, *lick-man*.
 TROGLODYTES, *one who runs into holes*.
 ARTOPHAGUS, *bread-eater*.
 TYROGLYPHUS, *cheese-scooper*.
 PTERNOPHAGUS, *bacon-eater*.
 CNISSODIOCTES, *one who follows the steam of the kitchen*.
 SITOPHAGUS, *wheat-eater*.
 MERIDAPRAX, *one who plunders his share*.

FROGS.

PHYSIGNATHUS, *puff-cheeks*.
 PELEUS, *the muddy*.
 HYDROMEDUSE, *water-queen*.
 HYPHIBOAS, *loud-bawler*.
 PELION, *the muddy*.
 TEUTLEUS, *beet-man*.
 POLYPHONUS, *great-talker*.
 LIMNOCHARIS, *lake-rejoicing*.
 CRAMBOPHAGUS, *cabbage eater*.
 LIMNISIUS, *of the lake*.
 CALAMINTHIUS, *of the reed*.
 HYDROCHARIS, *water-rejoicing*.
 BORBOROCOETES, *lying in the mud*.
 PRASSOPHAGUS, *garlic-eater*.
 PELUSIUS, *the muddy*.
 PELOBATES, *mud-walking*.
 PRASSÆUS, *garlic*.
 CRAUGASIDES, *croaking*.

ON commencing,¹ I first implore the quire of the muses to descend from Helicon into mine heart, for the sake of the song which I now commit to tablets [placed] upon my knees,² a

¹ Chapman renders this, "entering the fields," where there seems to be a typographical error for "field." Ἀρχόμενος is generally joined with some other word, as in Apoll. Rhod. i. 1, ἀρχ. σέο Φοῖβε. So ἐκ Διὸς ἀρχόμεσθα, Aratus, Phæn. i. The old paraphrase runs thus, ἀρχὴν ποιούμενος καταρχὰς ἐκ τοῦ ὄρους τοῦ Ἑλικῶνος ἐλεύσεσθαι εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν εὐχὴν ποιῶμαι τῆς ποιήσεως ἥντινα ἀοιδὴν βιβλίος ἔθηκα.

² Join ἐμοῖς γόνυσι, and compare Hippocrat. Ep. ad Damag. p. 12, ὁ Δημόκριτος εἶχεν ἐπὶ τοῖν γονάτοιιν βιβλίον ὃ ἐγραφεν ἐγκείμενος. Maittaire.

boundless strife, a war-clattering deed of Mars, desiring all men to receive it into their ears—how that the mice went victorious against the frogs, imitating the deeds of the earth-born hero giants, as was the report among men. Now it had such an origin.

Once on a time a thirsting mouse having escaped danger from a weasel,³ dipped his smooth⁴ beard into a lake near at hand, delighting himself with the sweet water. But him a talkative, lake-rejoicing [frog] beheld, and addressed him thus:

“Stranger, who art thou? Whence comest thou to the shore? And who begat thee? Speak all things truly, lest I catch thee telling falsehoods. For if I perceive thee to be a proper friend, I will lead thee to my dwelling, and will give thee gifts of hospitality, numerous and good. Now I am king Puff-Cheeks, who am honoured throughout the marsh, through all days ruling over the frogs. And Muddy, my sire, of erst gave me birth, mingling in embrace⁵ with Water-Queen by the banks of Eridanus. And I perceive that thou too art handsome and valiant above other [mice], a sceptre-wielding king, and a warrior in battles.⁶ But come, quickly detail thy pedigree.

But him Crumb-Filcher answered and addressed:

“Why askest thou concerning my race, which is well known to all, both men, and gods, and birds of the sky? I am hight Crumb-Filcher, but I am the son of my great-souled sire Bread-Muncher, and my mother indeed is Lick-Meal, daughter of king Chaw-Bacon. But she brought me forth in a hut, and nurtured me with viands, with figs, and nuts, and all sorts of eatables. But how canst thou make me a friend, who am no ways like [thee] in nature? For thy sustenance is in the waters, but it is my wont to feed upon as many things as are among men. Nor does the short-baked⁷

³ Not a cat, for “in agris mures non timent feles, sed mustelas.” Maittaire compares Arist. Hist. An. vi. [μύας] αἱ γαλαῖ αἱ ἄγριαι μάλιστα ἀναίρουσι, and Phædr. fab. i. 22.

⁴ *λίχρον*, the reading of the Oxford MS. seems more recherché than *ἀπαλόν*.

⁵ “Mix’d in nuptial knot.” Chapman.

⁶ A seeming imitation of Il. iii. 179, ἀμφότερον βασιλεύς τ’ ἀγαθός, κρατερός τ’ αἰχμητής.

⁷ This is probably the sense, though not the exact meaning of *τρισκο-*

loaf escape me in the well-rounded basket, nor the large flat⁸ cake, having plenty of sesame-cheese, nor a slice of ham, nor white-vested tripe, nor cheese newly pressed from sweet milk, nor nice honey-cake, which even the blessed [gods] long for, nor [in short] as many things as cooks prepare for the banquets of men, decking the dishes with all kinds of dainties. Never have I fled from the sad cry in war, but going straight forwards to the fight, I have mingled with the foremost combatants. I dread not man, although possessing a mighty frame, but going to his bed, I nibble the tip of his finger, and catch him by the heel, nor does pain attack the man, nor⁹ does sweet sleep leave him, when I bite. But there are two [creatures alone] which I dread very much throughout the whole earth, the hawk¹⁰ and the weasel, who bring great grief upon me, and the lamentable trap, where there is death by stratagem. But above all I dread the weasel, which is excellent [in cunning], which even in my hole hunts [me] out, when taking refuge in my hole.¹¹ I do not eat radishes, nor cabbages, nor gourds, nor do I feed upon fresh beets, nor parsley, for these are the viands of you who [dwell] in the marsh.

To this Puff-Cheeks, smiling, answered thus: "O stranger, thou boastest too much of the belly. Among us, also, both in the marsh, and on the land, there are very many wonders to behold. For unto the frogs hath the son of Saturn granted a two-lived sustenance, to leap along the earth, and to hide

πάνιστος, to the same purpose as Horapollo, Hieroglyph. § 47, p. 39, ed. Cassin., says that if there is a great choice of bread, the mouse always selects τὸν καθαρώτατον. Chapman translates,

"Thrice bouted, kneaded and subdued in paste,
In clean round kimmels."

⁸ If τανύπεπλος be correct, it must simply mean large, stretched out on all sides, like a modern seaman's biscuit. But I think we should read τανύπεπλον, referring it to σησαμότυρον, i. e. "having a thick paste (cf. Liddell, s. v. τύρος.) of sesame spread all over it like a robe." The metaphor is very humorously expressed by Chapman, "That crusty-weeds wear, large as ladies' trains."

⁹ One would almost expect οὐ δ' ἀπέφευγ' ὕπνος, but I have some doubts whether οὐδέ may take the second place in the sentence.

¹⁰ "Night-hawk." Chapman.

¹¹ "For by that hole, that hope says, I shall 'scape,
At that hole ever she commits my rape." Chapman.

our bodies beneath the waters, [to dwell in houses placed apart in two elements.]¹² But if thou art willing to learn these things also, it is easy. Get upon my back, and take hold of me, lest thou perish, so that, rejoicing, thou mayest • come to mine home.

Thus then he spake, and presented his back, and he mounted very quickly, putting his hands round his smooth neck, with a nimble leap. And at first he rejoiced, when he beheld the harbours near at hand, delighting himself with the swimming of Puff-Cheeks. But when he was now buried under the purple waves, weeping much, he lamented with too-late repentance, and plucked out his hairs, and drew up his feet to his belly,¹³ and his heart palpitated unusually,¹⁴ and he longed to reach the land. And dreadfully he groaned under the pressure of chill fear. But there suddenly appeared a water-serpent, a dreadful sight to both, and raised his neck straight up above the water. Seeing him, Puff-Cheeks dived down, in no wise reflecting what a companion he was about to leave to perish. And he went to the depth of the marsh, and avoided black fate; but he, (the mouse,) immediately he was let go, fell on his back in the water, and he cramped up his hands, and perishing, squeaked. Oftentimes indeed he sank beneath the water, and oftentimes again he came to the surface, kicking about, but it was not permitted him to avoid his destiny. First he stretched his tail over the waters, drawing it along like an oar, and, beseeching the gods that he might reach the land, he was washed away by the purple waves. And much he clamoured, and spake such a discourse, and harangued with his voice:

“Not thus¹⁵ did a bull bear the burthen of love on his shoulders, (when he carried Europa through the waves to Crete,) as this frog, swimming, hath carried me home on his

¹² Ernesti with reason rejects this line as spurious.

¹³ “With his feet fetch’d up to his belly.” Chapman.

¹⁴ Or “through inexperience,” i. e. dread at the unusual attempt he was making. Mattaire well compares Lucian, *Dial.*, ὑπὸ ἀηθείας ἐπιβᾶσα ὀχήματος παραδόξου κατέπεσεν ἐς τὸ πέλαγος. Chapman, “for the insolent plight in which his state did stand.”

¹⁵ From Chapman’s translation, he appears to have read verses 82—89 after vs. 71. But he was probably misled by supposing that the phrase οὐχ οὕτω was used in praise and boasting, not in complaint.

back, having stretched out his pallid body on the white stream." But his moistened hairs drew a very great weight upon him, and at length, perishing, he spoke such words :

"Thou shalt not escape notice, O Puff-Cheeks, having done these things deceitfully, having cast [me] shipwrecked from thy body, as from a rock.¹⁶ On the earth, O basest one, thou wast not my better in the pancratium, nor in wrestling, nor the course.¹⁷ But having deluded me, thou hast cast me into the water. God has an avenging eye, who, forsooth, will straightway requite a just punishment¹⁸ and revenge, (with which indeed the army of the mice shall punish thee, nor shalt thou escape.)"

Having spoken thus, he breathed his last in the water, but him Lick-Dish perceived, as he sate upon the soft banks, (and he truly went to the mice, a most swift messenger of his fate,) and he uttered a dreadful cry, and ran and told it to the mice.¹⁹

But when they heard [their companion's] fate, bitter wrath entered them all, and they then gave orders to their heralds, at dawn to summon a council to the house of Bread-Muncher, the unhappy sire of Crumb-Filcher, who was floating on his back in the marsh, a lifeless corse, nor was unhappy he any longer near the banks, but was swimming in the middle of the stream. But when they hastening came at dawn, first arose Bread-Muncher, enraged on account of his son, and spoke thus :

"O friends,²⁰ although I alone among the frogs have suffered many ills, yet evil fate is the appointed destiny of all. But I am now an object of pity, since I have lost three sons.

¹⁶ One would rather expect ἐπὶ πέτρᾳ, "shipwrecked upon a rock." Mattaire, however, thinks that πέτρα here signifies "*rupes* sive *scopulus* in mari."

¹⁷ Thus paraphrased by Parnell :

"At land thy strength could never equal mine,
At sea to conquer, and by craft, was thine,
But heaven has gods, and gods have searching eyes ;
Ye mice, ye mice, my great avengers, rise !"

¹⁸ This passage has rather the characteristics of a Christian writer. See Ernesti.

¹⁹ This is a strange tautology. Verse 99 must be an interpolation, as Ernesti suspected.

²⁰ "O friends, though I alone may seem to bear
All the infortune ; yet may all met here
Account it their case. But 'tis true, I am
In chief unhappy—"

Chapman.

For the first, indeed, a most hateful weasel slew, having snatched him away, catching him outside his hole. But another, in turn, ruthless men brought to his doom, having, by a new art, discovered a wooden engine, which they call a trap, being a destruction to mice. The third was beloved by me and his revered mother—him has Puff-Cheeks suffocated, leading him into the deep. But come, let us be armed, and go forth against them, having equipped our bodies in variegated arms.

Thus having spoken, he persuaded them all to be armed, and them did Mars, who has a care for war, urge on [to the fight]. First indeed they placed greaves around their shins, having broken off, and deftly worked, green bean [shells], which²¹ they themselves, coming by night, had devoured. And they had breastplates made of reed-strengthened skins,²² which, having stripped a weasel, they had skillfully made. But their shield was the boss of a lamp, while their spear was a good long needle, the all-brazen work of Mars. But the helmet on their foreheads was the shell of a nut.

Thus indeed were the mice armed; but when the frogs perceived [it], they swam up out of the water, and coming into one place, they assembled a council concerning evil war. But while they were considering whence [was] the tumult, and what the gathering, a herald came near, bearing a staff in his hands, Pot-Stalker, the son of great-souled Cheese-Scooper, bearing news of the evil report of war, and he spoke thus:

²¹ i. e. the beans, for *κύαμους* must be taken both for the shell and the bean. Compare Chapman's version:

“First on each leg the green shales of a bean
They closed for boots, that sat exceeding clean;
The shales they broke ope, but chaling by night,
And eat the beans; their jacks, art exquisite
Had shown in them, being cats' skins, every where
Quilted with quills: their fenceful bucklers were,
The middle rounds of can' sticks; but their spear
A huge long needle was—”

²² Ernesti wonders how the mice could have got at the weasel skin, and how one skin would suffice for so many. Hence he would read *θυρῶν*, “*intelligens caules in qua significatione θυρῶς scribi, Eustathius tradit. Caules plantarum demorsos stramineis vinculis junxere.*” He would then omit the following verse. I must confess that even Chapman's ingenious translation fails to satisfy me as to *καλαμοστέφειν βυρῶν*.

“O frogs, the mice, threatening you, have sent [me] to bid you be armed for war and battle. For in the water they have seen Crumb-Filcher, whom your king Puff-Cheeks slew. But fight, ye, who among the frogs are most valiant.”

Thus having spoken he declared [the matter], but the speech of the mice, entering into their ears, disturbed the minds of the haughty frogs. And, as they complained, Puff-Cheeks arose and said:

“O friends, I did not slay the mouse, nor did I behold him perishing. He must needs have been suffocated, playing near the marsh, imitating the swimmings of the frogs, but these most base ones now charge me who am innocent. But come, let us seek counsel, how we may utterly destroy these deceitful mice. Wherefore I will speak, as seems to me to be best. Having arrayed our bodies in arms, let us all make a stand near the furthestmost brinks, where the land is precipitous. But when making an onslaught against us, they come out, having seized them by the helmets, whosoever shall come near against us, let us hurl them straight into the marsh with them.²³ For thus having choked in the waters these creatures who cannot swim, we may here, with a good courage, upraise a trophy over the slain mice.”

Thus having spoken, he clad them all in arms. With the leaves of mallows indeed they surrounded their shins, and they had breastplates made from wide, fresh beets, and they had well prepared the leaves of cabbages for shields, and a long sharp reed was fitted to each as a spear, and helmets of light cockle-shells encircled their heads with a defence. And having armed themselves, they stood upon the high banks, brandishing their spears, and were each filled with wrath.

But Jove, having summoned the gods to the starry heaven, and having pointed out the forces of war, and the valiant combatants, both numerous and mighty, and bearing long spears, such an army as comes of the centaurs and giants—smiling pleasantly, he asked, who of the immortals would be allies to the frogs, or to the mice, and addressed Minerva:

“O daughter, goest thou in order to bear aid to the mice? For of a truth they are all continually leaping about thy temple, where they are delighted with the steam and delicacies from the offerings.”

²³ See Ernesti.

Thus spake the son of Saturn, but him Minerva addressed :
 “O father, never will I come as an assistant to the mice in trouble, since they have done me many ills, having befouled my garlands, and lamps, for the sake of the oil. But this thing, such as they have done, has particularly eaten into my soul, they have nibbled away a garment, which I had worked with mine own toil, of delicate thread, and I wove a delicate web, and they have made holes in it. But the † weaver²⁴ presses me, and demands usury of me, [and] on this account I am worn out. For having borrowed, † I worked it, and have not the wherewithal to pay back. But even thus I shall not be willing to aid the frogs. For neither are they discreet in mind, but yesterday, when I was returning from battle, when I was very tired, and wanted to sleep, they, making a noise, would not suffer me to close my eyes even for a minute,²⁵ and I lay sleepless with a headache, until the cock crowed. But come, let us gods avoid aiding these, lest some one of us be wounded by a sharp dart, [and lest any one be stricken as to his body with a spear or a sword;]²⁶ for they are going to fight hand to hand, even if a god were to come against them, and let us all be amused, beholding the strife from heaven.”

Thus then she spoke, and her the other gods all obeyed. But they all at once came together into one place, and two heralds, bearing the portent²⁷ of war, and then [with them]

²⁴ Chapman renders ἡπητήης, a *darnier*. But there is much difficulty in the whole passage. Coleridge, Introduction, p. 282, says, “I do not pretend to understand this passage exactly; there is evidently some confusion in the text. If πράσσει με τόκους, *exacts usury of me*, is genuine, is it possible to reconcile such an allusion to the Homeric age?” Parnell’s version is very witty, but it is not to the sense :

“For which vile earthly duns thy daughter grieve;
 The gods, that use no coin, have none to give.”

Coleridge considers that ἡπητήης means “the man of whom Minerva got the stuff;” but Chapman’s translation is confirmed by Phrynichus, who compares it with ἀκιστήης. Ernesti would read χρήστην, *creditozem*. The Leipsic MS. reads καὶ πολὺν με πράσσει, which certainly gets rid of some of the difficulty; but the passage is by no means satisfactory.

²⁵ οὐδ’ ὀλίγον,

“nor would stay
 Till one wink seized mine eyes.”

Chapman.

²⁶ Justly regarded as spurious by Ernesti.

²⁷ “Belli signum,” Virg. *Æn.* viii. l. Cf. Il. xi. 4. The verse however is wanting in two MSS., and since Jupiter is said to have given the

gnats, having large trumpets, sounded the dreadful signal of war, and Jove, the son of Saturn, looking down from heaven, thundered a portent of evil war.

Then first Loud-Roarer wounded Lick-Man with his spear, while standing among the foremost combatants, on the belly, in the middle of the liver, and he fell prone, and defiled his tender hairs in the dust. [And falling, he gave a crash, and his arms resounded upon him.]²⁸ But after him Hole-Creeper took aim at Mud-Son, and he fixed the sturdy spear in his breast, and black death seized him as he fell, and the soul flew from his limbs. But Beet-Man then slew Pot-Stalker, having smote him to the heart. And Bread-Munch struck Loud-Talker on the belly, and he fell prone, and the soul fled from his limbs. But when Love-Marsh beheld Loud-Talker perishing, he wounded Hole-Creeper with a mill-stone, coming upon him unawares, in the middle of the neck; but him darkness shadowed as to his eyes; [but²⁹ grief possessed Ocimides, and he let fly with a sharp bulrush. But he drew the sword of him who had made the attack upon himself, nor did he draw out the sword, but fell immediately before.]³⁰ But Lick-Man took aim at him with his shining spear, and smote him (nor did he miss) in the liver. But when Cabbage-Eater perceived this, he leaped down the deep banks in flight. But even thus he escaped not in the waters, for he (Lick-Man) smote him, and he fell, nor breathed again, and the marsh was stained with purple gore, and he himself was stretched out near the bank, swelling with the fat intestines [round] his flank. But he [also] slew Cheese-Scooper upon the very banks, and Reedy, perceiving Chaw-Bacon, fell into dismay, and leaped into the lake in flight, having cast away his shield. But Love-Water also slew king Chaw-Bacon, having smote him upon the forepart of the head with a stone,

signal by thunder, (vs. 201,) as in Od. xxi. 101. I think that it might be well spared.

²⁸ A doubtful insertion from the Iliad.

²⁹ These three lines are very awkward, and are apparently wanting in the MSS. The student must consult Maittaire's notes, where the cantones of the Iliad and Odyssey, out of which this description of the battle seems chiefly composed, are diligently collected. The name, *Οκιμίδης*, seems to be derived from the herb ocimus, the *βασίλειος* of the Greeks. See Casaub. on Pers. Sat. iv. 21.

³⁰ The confusion of persons in these lines is inextricable.

and the brain trickled out from his nostrils, and the earth was defiled with gore. But faultless Mud-Bed slew Litræus,³¹ and Lick-Dish killed faultless Mud-Bed, rushing at him with his spear, but darkness veiled him as to his eyes. And Munch-Garlick, perceiving [him], dragged Savour-Hunter by the foot, and choked him in the marsh, having seized him by the tendon of his foot. But Crumb-Filcher came to the aid of his slain companions, and smote Munch-Garlick on the belly, in the midst of the liver. And he fell before him, and his soul went to Hades-ward.³² But Mud-Stalker looking on, hurled a handful of mud against him, and befouled his forehead, and within a little blinded him. And he then was enraged, and taking in his sturdy hand a stone which lay on the plain, a heavy burthen of the field, with it smote Mud-Stalker beneath the knees, and the whole of his right shin was broken, and he fell supine in the dust. But Croak-Son came to his aid, and went in turn against him, and smote him in the middle of the belly; and the sharp bulrush went right through him, and on the ground were poured out all his entrails, as the spear was drawn out by the sturdy hand. And Wheat-Eater, as he perceived it on the banks of the river, limping gave back from the fight, and was grievously pained. And he leaped into the ditch, in order that he might escape utter destruction. But Munch-Bread smote Swell-Cheeks on the tip of the foot, and pained, he swiftly leaped into the marsh in flight.³³ But when Munch-Bread perceived him fallen in, yet half-alive, he forthwith ran up, longing to put an end to him. But when Garlick saw him fallen in, yet half-alive, he came through the foremost combatants, and took aim with a sharp bulrush. Nor did he break his shield, for the point of the spear was detained in it. [But noble Origanum, imitating Mars himself, smote him on the four-potted³⁴ blameless hel-

³¹ This name was restored by Barnes, in lieu of *Φιτραῖον*.

³² I am unwilling to lose the full force of *αἰδῶσθε*.

³³ Evidently an interpolated line. For how, asks Ernesti, could the mouse attack him, when he had leaped into the lake. The whole passage is omitted more or less in the MSS., and is in a most unpromising state of mutilation.

³⁴ A hopeless epithet. Ernesti conjectures *τετραφάληρον*. But as we read above, vs. 130, *ἡ δὲ κόρυς τὸ λέπυρον ἐπὶ κροτάφοις καρύοιο*, that the helmet of the mice consisted of a nutshell; is it not likely that the lost word is to be thus replaced: *ἀμύμονα, τετραλέπυρον*, of four thicknesses

met, who alone among the frogs fought gallantly in the crowd. And they rushed upon him, but he, when he perceived, awaited not the valiant heroes, but dived beneath the depths of the marsh.]³⁵

Now³⁶ among the mice there was a certain young one, surpassing the others, a fighter hand to hand, the beloved son of blameless Bread-Plotter, a general, showing himself a very Mars, valiant Share-Snatcher, who alone among the mice was surpassing in the fight. And he stood beside the marsh, exulting alone, apart from the rest; and he had determined to lay waste the race of warrior-frogs. And he would certainly have accomplished it, since mighty was his strength, had not the father of men and gods quickly perceived. And the son of Saturn then took pity on the perishing frogs, and having moved his head, he uttered such a speech:

“O gods! surely ’tis a great deed I behold with mine eyes. Not a little has Share-Snatcher astounded me, raging to slaughter the frogs in the marsh.³⁷ But let us with all haste despatch war-clattering Pallas, and Mars, who may restrain him from the fight, although being valiant.”

Thus indeed spake the son of Saturn, but Mars replied in words: “Neither the might of Minerva, nor indeed of Mars, will be able to avert utter destruction from the frogs. But come, let us all go as assistants, or let thy mighty weapon, Titan-slaying, of mighty deeds, be moved, [the weapon] by which thou didst slay far the best of all the Titans, [with which too thou didst once slay Capaneus, a mighty hero,]³⁸ and didst chain down Enceladus, and the wild tribe of giants, [let it be moved, for thus will he be taken, whoever is best.]

Thus indeed he spoke, and the son of Saturn hurled his smouldering bolt. First indeed he thundered, and shook mighty Olympus, and then, brandishing, he sent his dreadful

of nutshell?” Such a compound is, I think, well suited to the bombast of this quasi-epic poem. The corruption is easily accounted for.

³⁵ These lines are found only in the edition of Lycius, and partly in the MSS. See Ernesti.

³⁶ Cf. II. v. 9, sqq.

³⁷ The comma after *λίμνην* must be removed, and we must join *βατρ. κατὰ λίμνην*.

³⁸ This line is most awkwardly interposed between the mention of the Titans and Enceladus, and as it is omitted in some MSS. it may well be spared. Perhaps vs. 273 should also be omitted.

bolt, the weapon of Jove, and it flew down from the hand of the king. Having hurled it, he terrified all³⁹ both frogs and mice. But not even thus did the army of the mice rest, but still the more desired to lay waste the race of warrior frogs; unless the son of Saturn had compassionated the frogs, [looking down] from Olympus, who indeed then forthwith sent allies to the frogs. And they came anvil-backed,⁴⁰ curve-clawed, sidelong in gait, squinting, their mouths armed with pincers, shell-clad, bony, wide-backed, shining on the shoulders, crook-kneed, with outstretched hands, having sight in their breasts, eight-footed, two-headed, not to be handled, and they are called Crabs, who indeed with their mouths clipped off the tails, and feet, and hands of the mice, and their spears were bent. These too the timid mice dreaded, nor awaited them; but they turned to flight, and the sun now set, and the end of the war was brought to pass in one day.

³⁹ Cf. Hor. Od. i. 2, 2, "et rubente Fulmine sacras juculatus arces, terruit urbem; terruit gentes."

⁴⁰ Compare Cowper's spirited version:

"—— Sudden they came. Broad-back'd
They were, and smooth like anvils, sickle-claw'd,
Sideling in gait, their mouths with pincers arm'd,
Shell-clad, crook-kneed, protruding far before,
Long hands and claws, with eye-holes in the breast,
Legs in quaternion ranged on either side,—
And Crabs their name."